

Department of Auditor-Controller

Children's Group Home Ombudsman Activity Report

May 2013

Total Calls	<u>12</u>	General Statistics	
		Youth Callers	Time of Youth Calls
Calls returned within one business day	<u>12</u>	Female <u>5</u>	AM <u>2</u>
Calls resolved within 30 business days	<u>12</u>	Male <u>2</u>	PM <u>5</u>
Follow-up calls	<u>29</u>		
		Total Youth Callers <u>7</u>	
		Total Adult Callers <u>5</u>	

CALLS RELATING TO:

Collaboration Contacts/Referrals/Information

ILP Ombudsman	<u>2</u>
Child Protection Hotline	<u>1</u>
Group Home	<u>4</u>
General County Inquiry	<u>1</u>
TOTAL:	<u>8</u>

Personal Rights

<u> </u> Allowance	<u> </u> Health/Med, Dental, Psych Care
<u> </u> Clothing/Personal Property	<u>1</u> Respect (McKinley)
<u> </u> Contact	<u> </u> School/Community/Religious Svcs
<u>1</u> Food (Crittendon)	<u> </u> Social/Family Contact
<u> </u> Living Condition and Respect	<u> </u> Work/Job Skills
TOTAL: <u>2</u>	

Personal

<u> </u> Crime-related	<u> </u> Physical Abuse/Harm
<u> </u> Discipline	<u>2</u> Fear, Threats, Intimidation, Isolation (David & Margaret)
<u> </u> Discrimination	<u> </u> Relationship
<u> </u> Emotional Issues	<u> </u> Sexual Abuse
<u> </u> Pregnancy/Infant Care	<u> </u> Substance Abuse
TOTAL: <u>2</u>	

Visits/Outreach

Aviva Family and Children's Services
 Crittenton - Orange County
 Pennacle Foundation (2 sites)
 South Bay Bright Future (3 sites)

TOTAL: 7 sites

SYBIL BRAND COMMISSION MEETING
June 19, 2013
Reporting for the month of May 2013

AWOLs: There were **131** AWOLs involving **111** youth: 14 youth AWOL'd more than once, with some AWOL'ing between 2 to 5 times.

47 remain AWOL	1 TERM
36 returned to GH	3 HOP
21 are in JH	3 CCP

Outstanding AWOL detainments from previous months and arrests in May 2013:

11 youth were arrested/detained in May 2013. 9 were arrested on an outstanding bench warrant from previous months. 1 was arrested for having a controlled substance in school. 1 was arrested for violating Probation terms. Of all 11 youth, 5 are currently in JH, 1 is in a GH, 4 are in Camps, and 1 was released to DCFS.

Statistics and Findings regarding AWOLs in May

- 1) 36% of the AWOL incidents were Hispanic males with a mean age of 16.9 years. The overall average age of youth who AWOL'd in May 2013, was 16.8 years. Additional stats:

11%- Black males with an average age of 16.7 years.
22%- Hispanic females with an average age of 16.6 years.
20%- Black females with an average age of 16.8 years.
5%- White males with an average age of 17.1 years.
4%- "Other" race females with an age of 17.6 years.
2%- White females with an average age of 17.1 years.

Recommendation:

- For the past 10 months, the average age and majority race of AWOL'd youth remained about the same. Therefore, for all 10 months, Hispanic males above the age of 16 were around 40% to 50% of AWOL incidents. This statistic may likely be a representation of the general population of LA County. Even if that is a fact, it still means this is the population that Probation needs to work with to decrease AWOLs. DPOs, Therapists, or other GH and County staff, should interview at-risk youth (mainly Hispanic males around the age of 16) to find out about certain feelings related to age, gender, or cultural stresses and consider possible solutions to decrease these feelings/stresses.
 - Inform DPOs and GH staff to be aware of the demographics that are at most risk of AWOLing. Research and identify possible methods or daily practices of assisting youth to come to a less stressful state of mind.
- 2) In the previous months, a correlation was detected between the time youth AWOLs and the time it takes for the GH to report the incident and whether or not the youth remains AWOL'd or is detained). To illustrate:

Correlation between these factors (dashes represent passing time, whereas, more dashes represent a longer period of time):

Time Awol'd-----Time Reported-----Youth is detained either in a GH or JH.

**Time Awol'd-----Time Reported-----
Youth is still AWOL-----**

Based on statistical findings from previous months, *the sooner the GH reports the AWOL, the more likely it is that the Youth is detained within the end of the month.* For efficiency, we can call the passing period between the AWOL incident and the notification to authorities of the incident the “**Idle Phase.**” **Idle Phase or IP can be defined as duration of time passed between any two actions.** Certain actions are dependent on each other for progress or success. In this case, the two actions are the reporting of the AWOL by the GH and the detainment of the youth. In May, this correlation was not detected and was not held to be true.

Recommendation:

- Continue monitoring monthly trends to verify a continuing trend. Up to this month, 7 to 8 months out of the 10 months tracked have shown this continuing correlation.
 - Reiterate to GH staff and to legal guardians of youth the importance of reporting an AWOL as soon as the incident occurs. Specifically, all AWOLs should be reported within 24 hours in order to expedite the issuance of a bench warrant and the recovery of the youth. Statistics should be shared with GH staff to illustrate the real results of delayed reporting.
- 3) As with previous months, certain GHs showed a higher percentage of AWOLs than other GHs. This was determined by taking the number of AWOLs for that month and comparing it to the number of beds available in the GH (population). It is important to note that some GHs had the same youth AWOL'ing several times, but these AWOLs were all counted. For May 2013, some GHs had a 30% or higher AWOL rate.**

Recommendation:

- Continue to track the frequency of AWOLs for each GH and see if a consistent pattern remains amongst the same group homes. At this point, certain GHs have shown to have a consistently high number of AWOLs.
 - Several confounding factors have to be controlled to identify a direct correlation between GH treatment of youth and AWOLs. For example, a high AWOL rate for a GH could only mean that that particular GH gets higher risk youth.
 - Investigate GHs that have an unusually high number of AWOLs compared to other GHs to see possible reasons.
 - Interview youth during investigation.
 - Create a plan of action based on results (directives for GH, staff training, etc).
 - Monitor GH to see if trend has stopped after implementation of programs or directives.
- 4) This month, there was a slight correlation found related to IP between bench warrant requests and bench warrant issued and effect on youth detainment (IP-**

duration of time passed between two actions; see item #2 for explanation). Overall, previous months' data revealed that the sooner the bench warrant was issued, the higher the chances were of the youth being detained by the end of the month. However, as a confounding factor, identifying that the youth who were detained had bench warrants issued sooner than those who were not detained, could just also mean that majority of bench warrants are issued sooner than later, within Probation operations, overall.

Recommendation:

- Regardless of strong or weak correlations, consider the importance of having a bench warrant issued as soon as possible for an AWOL'd youth. The sooner a bench warrant is issued, the more likely it is that the youth will be detained by the end of the month.
- 5) Similar to the previous month, a query was done to find if out if there was relationship between AWOLs and a lack of contact with DPO in the first seven business days of SP. For May 2013, 41 of the AWOLs were youth who had face to face contact within the first 7 days. 71 of the AWOLs were youth who had a face to face contact after 7 days. 19 had no face to contact prior to AWOLing. As mentioned in the previous month, there was a slight spike in AWOLs in the first 3 days of placement. Overall, there seems to be no pattern or relationship found between AWOL behavior and DPO contact (consistent with the previous two months).

Recommendation:

- Continue tracking this data to see how it fluctuates. However, if a lack of correlations/patterns continues, stop tracking this data.
- 6) Patterns regarding suitable placement dates and AWOL dates were also noted. Here is the data for May 2013:

April:

14% AWOL'd within 7 days of SP
6% AWOL'd within 7 to 14 days of SP
9% AWOL'd within 15 to 21 days of SP
8% AWOL'd between 21 and 30 days of SP
63% AWOL'd after 30 days in SP

- 7) **Final Remarks on AWOLs:** Similar to last month, all 'insignificant' AWOLs were also incorporated into the data this month (i.e. youth AWOL'ing for an hour). Therefore, the findings/correlations may have slightly shifted in different patterns compared to previous months. However, certain trends relating to race, age, and sex continued to mirror the previous months' data. DPO and number of AWOLs per DPO were also tracked, but not included in this report. There are other trends that could be revealed, such as correlation between Gang affiliation and AWOLing or incidents.

There were no child deaths or suicide attempts reported for the month of May 2013, in iTrack. The largest category for SIRs continued to be "other", providing no description of the type of incident the youth was involved in.

Recommendation:

- Instruct all iTrack users to NOT select the category "other," unless incident undeniably does not belong under any specific category. Another option is to remove the category "other," and instead add additional specific categories (once it is determined why users are selecting "other"). Probation is currently discussing improvement ideas regarding iTrack with ISD software managers.

GROUP HOME MONITORING AND INVESTIGATIONS:

Current:

No Group Homes are currently on a HOLD Status.

Child Abuse, we had **3** referrals, all were **Unfounded**, **2** for alleged physical abuse and **1** for General Neglect.

Unfounded- (Leroy Haynes) Alleged Physical Abuse, youth alleged that a staff hit him in the face during a restraint.

Unfounded- (CAOF- Harvey House) Alleged Physical Abuse, youth alleged that a staff hit him in the stomach and taunts him to fight with him.

Unfounded- (Relative Caregiver) Alleged General Neglect, caller alleged that the youth was abandoned by her Aunt and is staying with multiple people.

Group Home Investigations:

We had **8** Group Home investigations during the month of May 2013, **5** were **Unfounded**, and **3** were **Substantiated**.

Two youth branded happy faces into their hands leaving burn marks, supervision issue was **Unfounded**. (Penny Lane, Sat X)

Group Home took youths to a Dodger game without prior approval from the DPO and a youth subsequently went AWOL. Allegation was **Unfounded**. (Maryvale)

Staff failed to give a youth their morning medication, allegation was **Substantiated**. (Optimist, Eagle Rock)

Citizen made a complaint to the BOS that a Group Home dog when being walked by a staff and youth was defecating on his lawn without cleaning it up. Investigation concluded that the home the citizen complained about was not a licensed Group Home, allegation **Unfounded**. (Not a Probation Group Home, nor a licensed Group Home)

SBC complaint, Group Home failed to comply with requested corrective action after three visits, allegation **Substantiated** and all corrective action has now been completed and verified. (CAOF- Terry House)

Youth stole several vials of lidocaine from dentist office and passed out three vials to other youth at the Group Home. Vials were confiscated. Investigated supervision at the

dentist office and although Group Home was not found to be out of compliance, they still completed a CAP to ensure measures are taken for future appointments. Allegation was **Unfounded**. (Trinity El Monte)

Group Home failed to inform Probation Directors of a serious incident during non-business hours, allegation was **Substantiated**. (San Gabriel Children's Center)

Youth ingested 27 Triple C pills and an additional 57 Triple C pills were confiscated. Allegation for supervision issues was **Unfounded**. (Florence Crittenton)

Monitoring:

We have posted all Monitoring Reports on the Probation website for the 2011-2012, fiscal year. We are finishing up the 2012-2013, fiscal year, for which reports will be posted soon. Some are in various stages of approval and the remaining are in progress.

Permanency-

We are in various stages of preparation for **4 potential adoptions** and **5 potential legal guardianships** by the early part of next year.

In May 2013, we completed no Adoptions or Legal Guardianships.